

Christ triumphing, and Satan raging :

A
S E R M O N

ON MATTH. XII. 28.

Wherein is proved, that the KINGDOM OF
GOD IS COME UNTO US at this Day.

First preached at *Nottingham in Pennsylvania,*
Jan. 20. 1740-1.

And now published for the common Benefit.

By *SAMUEL FINLEY*, Preacher of the Gospel.

Ego --- cum per eos qui meos labores legunt, non solum
doctior, verum etiam emendatior fio; propitium mihi
Deum agnosco: & hoc per Ecclesiæ Doctores maxime ex-
pecto, si & in ipsorum manus veniant, dignenturque nosse
quæ scribo.

Aug. de bonâ persever. in fine.

--- Knowing that I am set for the Defence of the Gospel.

Phil. i. 17.

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THE PREFACE TO THE READER.

I Doubt not but a Variety of Censures will be pass'd upon this Discourse, and its Author, by those who are disaffected at the Work of GOD. Some may say, It can be nothing but Pride and Self-Conceit, that engages a Youth to appear in Print: Or perhaps they will say, Raw Novice; or, How knoweth this Man Letters? Others may say, I push the Matter a little too far in many Things; that my Doctrine is too harsh; and may call it a Piece of Railery. But neither so do their Wives agree; for if the Doctrine be too grating and galling to the generality of Mankind, how then can I expect to raise my Reputation, and gratify my Pride by making it publick? And tho' I do so with a Desire of and Love to those who oppose themselves; yet they will be ready to conclude, that it proceeds from Passion and Rage. But let the Reader carefully observe the Chapter out of which my Text is taken, and upon which my Arguments are chiefly founded; and see whether the same Objection might not have been made to our LORD by the Pharisees, when he reasoned with them upon the same Subject. And I should in vain look for a better Reception than he met with, from the same Ranks of Persons, if I deal faithfully with them.

them. Yet I must not forbear. It may please GOD to make it useful to some. I would earnestly recommend a serious Perusal of that Book, entitled, The fulfilling of the Scriptures, to such as call this a New Scheme. I am persuaded, that a new Impression of said Book might be very serviceable to the present Age: It is gravely and judiciously written.

I need make no other Apology for the Method or Stile of this Sermon, but only, that it is better to be understood by all, than admired by any. However, 'tis not generally so flat as to be nauseous. I hold it a good Rule, to judge of any Treatise from the Notions which the Strain thereof seems naturally to convey and instil; and not from some defenceless Expressions, or Sentences dropt by the by. But there is a Club lately formed, who call themselves Querists, that seem pleased with the contrary Method: If they can find an unguarded Word or Sentence, they presently deduce a Doctrine from it, which the Author's general Strain can prove was never by him intended. When a figurative Expression, in a Book to them displeasing, will bear a fine Witticism, or satyrical Jeer; if it cannot be call'd unsound Doctrine, they will make it horrid Nonsense; and sometimes strive to perplex Things that are plain enough; and seem desirous to persuade the World, that such forced Meanings are the Author's Principles. Thus they have dealt by Mr. Whitefield; and thus they may, perhaps, deal by this Sermon. For many will hate and contradict what they are unable to confute. But the Reader may see what a perverse Way of Reasoning it would be, to affirm that a Kingdom is weak, because there are some depopulated Villages in it: Yet after this Manner do the Querists reason. I can truly say, that it is an unpleasing Task to me, thus to censure any: But the Necessity of it, in the present Case, is plain, viz. That none may be imposed on to think a Book is confuted, when some Expressions are censured in the aforesaid Manner. Either let the dissatisfied Persons

sons rase the Foundation on which I have built; or, if that cannot be done, let them show, that the Super-structure is not built upon the Foundation. In a Word: They ought regularly to answer the Arguments I have advanced. Or, if they cannot, is it not reasonable to give due Attention to them; and not vainly pun on Words, or confuse Passages where the Meaning is plain and obvious?

I There is one Thing further I would observe to the Reader, viz. That Religion has frequently been traduc'd by its Enemies, as the procuring Cause of common Calamities: And accordingly, some of our Opposers do invidiously speak after this Manner, "That the Misery of an hard Winter has been sent upon the Land as a just Judgment for such a Devilish Work as has been amongst us." I mention this the rather, because it is exactly parallel to a Calumny which Heathen Opposers cast upon Christianity in the primitive Ages. When a sore Famine was in the Roman Empire, they boldly spoke to this Purpose, viz. "That the Gods (for such was their Dialect) had sent the Famine as a Punishment on account of the Christians;" and hence they thought it Justice to sacrifice them, and appease their angry Deities by utterly destroying the Christian Race. By such Suggestions the Devil strives to imbitter the World against the Power of Godliness: We are not ignorant of his Devices. Wo to the Inhabitants of the Earth, for the Devil is come down with great Wrath, because he knows his Time is short. No doubt he will ere long, upon some such Pretence, persuade his Servants that it is not fit such Fellows as we should live. For thus has he always done. Oh that GOD may convince Opposers who reason thus! For if they persist, they will find to their sad Experience, that GOD will send not only temporal Calamities, but eternal Woes on those who continue to despise his Work: And will give his Witnesses Power to smite the Earth with all Plagues, as often as they will, Rev. xi. 6.

And

And that not because of the Progress of vital Piety, but for the Contempt and Rejection of it: Tho' the ungodly World, as they wrest the Scriptures, so also they wrest the Providences of GOD to their own Destruction. Thus were the Jews insatuated to interpret all the Prognosticks of their final Desolation, as Tokens of their compleat Victory.

Reader, whoever thou art, of whatever Party, I tell thee, (which is all the Assurance I can at present give) that my Desire and Prayer is, that thy immortal Soul may reap Advantage from what I have written, by the Blessing of GOD. And if you will read it with the same Desire, without Prejudice, I presume you will acknowledge, that it does not seem to have any other Tendency. Take it then, as a Token of my Love to thy Soul, And if GOD thy Maker does bless it for the designed End, give him the Glory. And pray for

Thy Soul's Wellwisher,

SAMUEL FINLEY.

MATTH. XII. 28.

*But if I cast out Devils by the Spirit of GOD,
then the Kingdom of GOD is come unto you.*

MY Brethren, if we look back into the History of the Church, we may see that CHRIST's Coming to it has not been so clear and evident, as not to be mistaken and rejected, even by his own professing People; *He came to his own and his own received him not*, John i. 11. And because this is the very Hinge whereon our eternal Happiness turns, every one must say, that it concerns us all to study the surest and clearest Light in this Matter. It deserves the most solemn and serious Attention; the most calm and deliberate Consideration; the most impartial and unprejudiced Examination: Because it is an Affair of eternal Moment. It is no sleeveless Errand I come to you about this Day; what I speak, will be in Remembrance to all Eternity. I come to speak for GOD, who is here present as a Witness of my Intentions, and a Judge of the Truth of my Doctrine, and a Witness of the Reception you give it. In the Fear of this Great GOD let us both speak and hear. And do not mistake me, as if I were speaking for myself. No; I ask not your Silver or Gold; I value not your Applause or Dispraise; nor do I desire from a Party-Zeal, to wed you to an Opinion. I desire none, no not a Brother, to join with me herein, unless he be joined to JESUS CHRIST; or from a Prospect that he may be joined to him. For, my Principle is, That whoever are hypocritical Pretenders, either Ministers or People, will, sooner or later, take Offence, and be a Dishonour and a Wound

Wound to Religion, as *Demas* and *Alexander*. If you will mistake me, to your own Loss it will be, and your Blood will be upon your own Heads; for I have endeavoured to prevent it.

The Occasion of the Words of my Text you will find by looking back to *ver. 22*, where is recorded a great Miracle wrought by our LORD, *viz.* Healing a Person possess'd by the Devil, blind and dumb: So evident was it, that he both spake and saw; it could be no Delusion. In *ver. 23*. is observed the Effect of this on the Multitude; they were amazed, and said, *Is not this the Son of David?* They seemed well affected, and just ready to acknowledge this to be the Work of GOD, and to embrace CHRIST as the promised *Messiah*, until the *Pharisees* jumbled them all again. For, no doubt, they concluded, that if it were the Finger of GOD, surely the pious *Pharisees*, who knew the Law best, and expounded it to them, would not oppose it. And therefore they turn their Eyes from the Miracle to hear the angry *Pharisees*.

What could any think, but that this Miracle would have put 'em for ever to Silence, and have made even the Devil ashamed to oppose what was so evident? Or at least have satisfied the People about CHRIST, so as they would not give Heed to the *Pharisees*. But, from the following History we find it did neither. For when the *Pharisees* perceived the People's Readiness to embrace JESUS as the *Messiah*, they were afraid of the Consequence; for they knew their Credit must then sink, perceiving that as many as were his *warm Adherents*, disregarded them, and their unsearching, legal, unprofitable, and powerless Doctrines. And when they could not deny the Matter of Fact, they ascribe it to the Devil. And to prepossess and imbitter the People effectually against him, they call him, *This Fellow*.

Fellow. A bitter Scoff, a satyrical Jeer, Mocking, Laughing at the Work of GOD, or its Promoters, calling it *Enthusiasm* or *Folly*, will readily turn carnal Hearts against it; and make them shrink from it as a shameful Thing. *This Fellow*, say they, tho' 'tis true he has cast out a Devil, yet that will not prove him to be the Son of *David*; for the Devil himself can cast out Devils; do not think the more of him for that; for we can prove from the Scriptures that he is not the Son of *David*, and consequently he must be an *enthusiastic Fellow*, in League with the Devil, and to obtain the Applause of ignorant People, he gets the Assistance of the Devil to cast out Devils. Oh how would this shock the People, and raise their Aversion against CHRIST! to hear their own beloved Teachers painfully warn them against him as a *Devilish Fellow*!

And alas! thus it has been with many at this Day, when the Power of GOD has appeared in the Assemblies. They have been put into some Amazement, and stunn'd about their own Case; have entertain'd a favourable Opinion of the Work of GOD, until they have heard other Ministers speak against it; and by their Means, and the Devil's Temptations, joined with the Plague of an unsanctified Heart, have not only been jumbled, and turn'd from it, but have turn'd actually against it. They who to-day cry *Hosanna*, to-morrow, when embitter'd by the Chief Priests, cry, *Crucify him*.

From *ver.* 25. we have our LORD's Reply in Vindication of his Work from the false and malicious Aspersions of his Opposers. And hence his Ambassadors are taught to do the same Thing; to justify his Work, tho' they should thereby cast Contempt on all the Ministers on Earth. Why then, will any make it an Objection against the Work of GOD, that we speak against the Ministers who oppose it; since its being his Work, will not only ju-

stify us in so doing, but also make it a necessary Duty? Therefore, after CHRIST's Example I ought to vindicate his Work; nay, there is a Wo to me if I do not, tho' it should cost me my Life; tho' it should be to the everlasting Disgrace of all that oppose it, whether Ministers or People, Friends or Enemies, Relations or Strangers. Do not then mistake me, as if I spoke from any personal Prejudice against any, while I profess the contrary; while I show a better Reason for my so doing. No; the Persons of many who are now Opposers, are dear to me, and never did me any Harm.

Our LORD refutes the *Pharisees*, 1. From the *Inconsistency of their Argument with human Policy*. For whoever has a Kingdom, and desires to preserve it, would certainly take the most probable Means for that End; And since the Safety of a Kingdom consists in the Unity of its Members, consequently the contrary tends to its Overthrow. For if it were divided against itself, it would destroy itself by intestine Broils, and become an easy Prey to a foreign Enemy. Now, as *Satan* has a Kingdom, so he has Policy enough to preserve it, and his Malice against GOD and Mankind is not lessen'd. But if he would forcibly cast out Devils in Confirmation of a Doctrine directly subversive of his Kingdom, surely we must think he has forgot his Policy, has laid aside his Malice, is divided against himself, is set for the Reformation of Hell, and consequently his Kingdom cannot long continue.

2. He refutes 'em from their *Inconsistency with themselves*. For his Disciples and Followers, who were some of their Children, to whom they were more favourable, did cast out Devils in his Name. And this the *Pharisees* had acknowledged was the *Finger of GOD*; for so much is imply'd in his saying, *Therefore they shall be your Judges*. But when he did the same by his own Authority, they said

it was by the Devil. And therefore he asks them, *If I by Beelzebub cast out Devils, by whom do your Children cast them out?* They cast out Devils, and you acknowledge that it is by the Power of GOD; I do the same, and you say, It is by *Beelzebub*. Why are you so inconsistent with yourselves? When the Effects are the same, by what Rule can you assign quite contrary Causes? *Therefore they shall be your Judges, i. e.* They shall bear Witness against your Partiality, so that you shall be condemned: [As we commonly say such an Evidence *condemn'd* a Man.] But on the contrary, if what you say will not bear Examination, then it will follow, That *I cast out Devils by the Spirit of God*; and if so, then it also follows, That *the Kingdom of God is come unto you.* The Kingdom of GOD, *i. e.* the *Messiah's* Kingdom, the Dispensation of the Gospel, the Day of GOD's Power: *The LORD whom ye sought is come to his Temple*, and instead of rejoicing thereat, you reject his Kingdom against yourselves; instead of praising GOD for it, you are grieved that it is come, and wish it away again: Wo to you that desired the Day of the LORD; to what Purpose is it for you? You thought it would be clear Day that you could not mistake it, whereas it is Darkness, and not Light. It comes not with Observation: Yet it is come *unto you*; but that is all, the Kingdom of GOD is not *within you*. It is come *into* the Hearts of others, but is only come *unto* your Ears. However, what you so long look'd for, and prayed for, is come; if ye will receive it, receive it.

Observe. The Argument by which our LORD proves that the Kingdom of GOD is come, is his *casting out Devils*. And having proved, that this could not be the *Work of the Devil*, he infers, that it must be the *Work of GOD's Spirit*. And hence concludes, That the Kingdom of GOD is come to

them. Hence then clearly follows this Doctrinal Observation, viz.

That it is a sure Proof of a gracious Work of GOD's Spirit, when the Devil is cast out, by the Means of true Gospel-Doctrine.

What I chiefly intend by this Text is, *To prove, That the Kingdom of GOD is come unto us at this Day.* But some may say, How does this Doctrine tend to prove it, seeing none possessed of Devils are now miraculously cured? Therefore, to obviate this Objection, I have chosen the following Method :

I. *I will shew, how it will appear that the Devil, in some Measure, possesses every unregenerate Soul.*

II. *By what Marks it will be discernable when he is cast out.*

III. *Prove the Doctrine.*

IV. *Show, That the Kingdom of GOD is come unto us at this Day.*

And lastly, *apply.*

And First, I am to show, *How it will appear that the Devil, in some Measure, possesses every unregenerate Soul.*

I am sensible this must be a shocking Expression, and no Wonder tho' it be: And some may take Offence, and say I speak in an unprecedented Strain, and rashly abuse Mankind. But do not conclude either too hastily, until you have weighed my Reasons. But first I will premise, that I do not mean he possesses them so, as to deprive them of the Use of the Powers or Faculties of Soul or Body, as he did the Person mentioned in this Passage of Scripture; but only that he possesses them so, as to pervert the Use of these Faculties to quite wrong Purposes.

Now,

Now, let it be observed, that this Person is said to be possess'd by a *dumb Spirit*, in *Mark ix. 17.* by a *Metonymy* of the Effect, *i. e.* the Spirit is said to be dumb from the Dumbness which he caused in the Person possessed by him. Now then, if he is properly said to possess these, whom he deprives of their *natural Sight*, or *Speech*; the same Reason will hold of those whom he deprives, of their *spiritual Sight*: And thus he deals by the Wicked, *2 Cor. iv. 4. in whom the God of this World has blinded their Minds.* And hence he is justly said to possess those who do his Drudgery, as a Master possesses a Servant: For, says the Apostle, *his Servants ye are whom ye obey, Rom. vi. 16.* These then, in whom he raises lustful, adulterous Motions, are justly said to be possessed by an *unclean Spirit*, *Matth. xii. 43.* As *Ahab's* Prophets are said to be acted by a *lying Spirit*, *1 Kings, xxii. 22.* The LORD JESUS says as much as I have said, in *John viii. 44.* where he tells the unconverted Jews, *Ye are of your Father the Devil.* This notes the Possession he had of them, as a Father possesses a Son. In *Eph. ii. 2.* the Prince of the Power of the Air, *i. e.* the Devil, is said to *work in the Children of Disobedience*, as a Man works, and vends his Wares in a Shop which he possesses. 'Tis a proud Fondness to affect more Modesty than CHRIST or his Apostles. I may boldly say, *A graceless Heart is the Devil's Mint-House.* No Wonder then, that it is a Forgery of Lies, Deceit, and Hypocrisy; or a Cage of unclean and hateful Thoughts; a very Sink of *Hellish Wickedness.* For why; the Devil is the *God of this World*, *i. e.* of unconverted, worldly Men, of whatever Rank or Station they be; and he sets up his Kingdom in their Hearts, in Opposition to the GOD of Heaven. He is said to have filled the Heart of *Ananias and Saphira*, causing them to lie against the Holy Ghost, *Acts v. 3.* And can he *fill* the Heart, and not *possess* it?

And

And is not every Liar a Child of the Devil, who was a Liar from the Beginning, and the Father of it? *John* viii. 44.

But if these Arguments should be thought insufficient, I will appeal to Matters of Fact. Take we then a View of a *carnal Heart*; such as we have in *Rom.* i. 29, 30. and *1 Cor.* vi. 9, 10. *Gal.* v. 19, 20. and therein we shall find, *All Unrighteousness, Fornication, Wickedness, Covetousness, Maliciousness, Envy, Murder, Debate, Deceit, Malignity, Whispering, Back-biting, Hatred of GOD, Pride, Boasting, Despite, Invention of evil Things, Disobedience to Parents, Ignorance, Blindness, Treachery, Cruelty, Hard-heartedness, Implacability, Unmercifulness, Idolatry, Adultery, Effeminacy, Sodomy, Thefts, Drunkenness, Mockery of what is good, Extortion, Unclean Lusts, Wantonness, Lasciviousness, Witchcraft, Hatred, Anger, Emulations, Wrath, Strife, Seditions, damnable Heresies, Hypocrisy, and many more such like.* O Sinner! look at thy Picture, and see what a deformed Creature thou art; but withal consider, that the half is not told. Now, to whom shall we attribute these Works? Would not any of you say, that GOD never implanted such cursed Qualities in you as these? and would you not rather ascribe them to the Devil, than to yourselves? And if these Things be in you, what is the Consequence? Surely, *his Servants ye are to whom ye yield Obedience.* If you are angry, and hate me for telling you so, do you not prove what I say? For, he that *hateth* another Man, is a *Murderer*, *1 John* iii. 15. And is not Murder a Work of the Devil, who was a Murderer from the Beginning? And hence he is said to be in Danger of Hell-Fire, who calls another *Fool*, thro' Rancour and Malice, *Matth.* v. 22. Thus it appears, that the Devil possesses every unregenerate Soul.

But

But some may say, I have never been guilty of these Actions mentioned, and consequently the Devil has never had Possession of me.

But tho' you have not been actually guilty of *all* these; yet of *as many* of them, as will prove all that I say. But if you would make a due Estimate of your Heart, you must look on it, as containing the Seeds of all the Wickedness any Mortal has ever been guilty of: For, tho' the inborn Corruptions of some are several Ways restrained from breaking out into Action; yet, until the Heart be renewed by Grace, it is still under the Power of Sin. Those who have been greatly reformed in Externals, and afterwards turned openly profane, are a Proof of this. Besides, the Apostle teaches us the same Thing, in *Eph. ii. 3.* while he puts himself, and others who were then Christians, in the same Rank with the worst of Sinners, before their Conversion. Notwithstanding his blameless Life, yet he is in the same Rank with these who were dead in Trespasses and Sins, in whom the Prince of the Power of the Air did work. *Among whom we all had our Conversation in Times past --- and were by Nature the Children of Wrath, even as others.*— We need no more wonder why many moral knowing Men do vehemently oppose the Work of GOD.

Now, since these are the Evidences of a Soul possessed of *Satan*; the contrary Characters must be engraven on it by the Spirit of GOD, when *Satan* is cast out.

And hence we may the more easily know, in
The Second Place, *By what Marks it will be discernable when a Soul is freed from the Possession of Satan.*

And this will be discernable, 1. To the Persons themselves. 2. To other Christians. 3. In some Measure to the Graceless World.

And

And 1. The Persons themselves may know : For, when the Spirit of GOD comes to cast out *Satan*, he convinces of *Sin*, of *Righteousness*, and *Judgment*. He first removes their natural Blindness ; and they see themselves to be all that I have described them to be, and worse. Then they can feelingly say, with *Paul*, *I know that in me dwells no good Thing!* For the Holy Ghost sets home the Law with Power upon their Consciences, in the spiritual Meaning and Extent of it ; and they see it is *exceeding broad*, directing, not only to the Maker, but also to the Manner of their Services ; and extending, not only to all their Words, and all their Actions, but also to all their Thoughts. By this Means, they perceive these Things to be Sins which they little thought of before. They see they have never given the Law its Due in any one Instance of Life, in Thought, Word, or Deed. The Ignorance, Pride, Selfishness, Hypocrisy, Slothfulness, &c. that were mixed with their best Doings, are opened to their View, and they behold a whole World of Iniquity. But further, they see the heinous Nature of Sin, how hateful, how contrary to the Nature of GOD. Also the dreadful Consequences of it ; the infinite Power and Justice of GOD engaged against 'em for it ; the burning Hell they are exposed to on account of it ; the glorious Heaven they lose by it ; and withal their own utter Inability to expiate the Guilt of the smallest Sin. Their natural Stupidity and Carelessness is also remov'd ; they are exceedingly distressed, and can be no longer easy ; nothing will quiet them but an assured Token of GOD's Favour and pardoning Grace. Thus he convinces of Sin ; and they must needs know what they are convinced of.

Then the Holy Ghost opens up the Scriptures, and reveals to their fainting Souls the Scripture-Method of Salvation by the Righteousness of CHRIST ;
and

and makes them see, that tho' they have no heavenly Beauty, Wisdom, or Righteousness, yet CHRIST is all they can want or desire: They are so surely convinced of this, that they as little doubt of his Righteousness, as of their own Sins. They can venture their Souls, their eternal Happiness, upon the Truth of the Gospel; they do not at all doubt of Life in CHRIST, if they could but win him and be found in him. They see the Excellency of this Method of Salvation, and the absolute Necessity of this perfect Righteousness. Then they are convinced, that as he is a compleat, so he is also a willing Saviour, and will refuse none that come to him. Thus they are convinced of Righteousness; and can they be convinced of any Thing, and not know that they are convinced of it?

Further, their native Pride is broken down; their hard Hearts are melted, and their obstinate Wills made pliable, and cheerfully consent to take CHRIST for *Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption*. Then he is lovely above all Things, the Chiefest amongst ten Thousand in their Esteem. He is their Choice, their Delight, their Happiness, the Center of all their Affections, the Ground of their Hopes and Joys. They cannot be satisfied without a Sense of his Presence; they are troubled when he hides his Face. Instead of a slavish Terror and Horror of Conscience, they are sometimes fill'd with inward Peace and Consolation, and Joy in the Holy Ghost. Then is the Power of Sin broken, and the Life is reformed to better Purpose than ever it was before. They love what they formerly loathed; and hate what they loved. Strict Holiness is lovely, GOD's Laws are sweet to their Souls; they delight in religious Exercises, in religious Company, and spiritual Conference, instead of wanton Frolicks and vain Mirth. Instead of Pride, Covetousness, outrageous Passions, Flattered and

Wrathfulness; they have Humility, Meekness and Gentleness, Love to the People of GOD, Love to their Enemies, a generous Contempt of earthly Things, Heavenly-Mindedness. Instead of careless Lives, there is a Watch upon their very Thoughts. They daily mourn under a Sense of their daily Mis-carriages, and grieve at the inborn Corruptions which they feel in their Souls. Thus they fight under CHRIST's Banner, against the Devil, the World, and the Flesh. Thus they are convinced of Judgment; for whoever have felt these Things, may know, That *the Prince of this World is judged*: Or, in other Words, that the Devil is cast out. *John xvi. 11.*

2. This will be discernable to other Christians, and that by Analogy, or Comparison of Experiences: For, tho' the Work of GOD may differ in some Circumstances in the Beginning; yet in Substance it is the same; and when it is wrought, is just the same in all; there is but one Faith and one Spirit. Real Christians have all the same Desires, the same Fears, the same passionate Breathings of Love to GOD and CHRIST, the same Pursuits after Holiness, and Mortification of Sin; the same Complaints, the same Joys and Comforts; the same Supports and Encouragements: Cast down and raised up on the very same Accounts; have the same Savour, Taste and Relish of divine Things. There is an Oneness among them, a Fellow-Feeling of one another's Grievances, a Bearing of one another's Burdens. This endears them to one another above the dearest graceless Relations. Now, 'tis from this Sameness of Experiences that their Knowledge of one another proceeds. When they tell each other what GOD has done for their Souls, they understand one another sweetly; and the one sees himself in the other's Heart when it is told him. As a Traveller (making Allowance for Similitudes) will know that another has

has travelled the same Road, by his exact Description of particular Places; and can distinguish between him and another that has only read the Geographical Description of it, by the different Remarks they will unavoidably make. And what tho' some Hypocrites may be taken for Christians, and some weak Christians mistaken too; yet *particular Exceptions do not break general Rules*: The Body of Hypocrites and Christians will not be so easily mistaken by experienced judicious Christians, as carnal People imagine. For tho' many graceless Persons may learn to talk of Christian Experiences, yet they will generally bewray their Ignorance in some Thing or other, that every real Christian knows, when they come close to the Point. But still they will want that Power, and Relish, and Savour of divine Things, which are inimitable. And hence the Apostle, in 1 Cor. iv. 19, 20. says, *I will know, not the Words of such an one, but the Power; for the Kingdom of GOD consists not in Word, but in Power*. So every real Christian can distinguish between *Words* and *Power*; or else the same Apostle would have in vain directed them to *turn away from such as had the FORM, but denied the POWER of Godliness*, 2 Tim. iii. 5. Now, if in express Words the Power were denied, the Form would be wanting; and therefore it must be such as have the Form, and in Words confess that Power of Godliness, from whom Christians must turn away, only because they *have not* this Power. But how could this be done, unless they could distinguish between the *Form* and the *Power*? But this they can do; for, whoever has had the Spirit and Presence of GOD, cannot but know when he wants it, and when he has it; and knowing what Emotions of Heart he has in such and such Frames, he will the more readily discern, when another speaks, prays, or preaches with the same Relish of divine Things; as he that has felt the

Passions of Anger, Love or Joy, will the more readily observe the Symptoms of them in another. And a spiritual Object is as discernable to a spiritual Man, as a natural Object to a natural Man. But the natural Man, who is spiritually blind, cannot possibly perceive the spiritual Object, cannot savour the Things of GOD. But a Christian cannot but know, when another speaks skilfully, feelingly, and distinctly of his own Case; and also when it is ignorantly, insipidly, indistinctly, and powerlessly spoken of. And hence the Apostle says, *The spiritual Man judgeth all Things, yet he himself is judged of no Man*, 1 Cor. ii. 15. That is, he can discern spiritual Things, and is best able to judge of spiritual Persons; yet he is not to be judged, as to his Experiences, by a natural Man; because the natural Man is not a fit or proper Judge of spiritual Things, seeing he understands them not. — Now these internal Evidences of a Work of GOD, can never be represented to the Understandings of such who have never felt them, any more than Light or Colours to one born blind; he wants Proof that there is Light, and asks how we can know it; we can only tell him that the Light comes attended with its own Evidence, and by the Light we see Light. Just so it is here: Carnal Persons have a great many Exceptions against this Doctrine; they wonder how we can pretend to judge of the State of others; and will tell us, *We take GOD's Prerogative upon us to judge the Hearts of Men*; whereas we only judge them from what appears to us, in so far as we know of their Manner of Life and Christian Experiences. And hence it is, that whenever GOD opens the Eyes of any, they soon see what Company to join with. Hence likewise it is, that Christians cannot but judge these to be graceless, who oppose, dislike, or show Ignorance of those Things which they know to be the Things of the Spirit of GOD. When they

they tell them so, they call it Hatred and Rage ; but this Doctrine proves that it is not.— Hence we may also infer, That these Persons, who have sufficient Opportunity of knowing the Lives of Professors, and yet see no Difference among such as seem to have an equal Quantity of Morality, and Head-Knowledge ; I say, this Doctrine will prove these to be blind themselves. No doubt Pharisee-Teachers will ask, *Are we blind also ?* However, from hence we see how the Work of GOD in casting out Satan, is *discernable to Christians*. They can say with *Peter*, Let others think and speak as they will, yet *we believe and are sure that this is the Work of GOD*. For when they perceive that GOD works the same Things in others as in themselves, it confirms their Belief of it. Indeed graceless Persons cannot be so certain ; as appears by their frequently falling away in all Ages, when Persecution, or other Offences come ; and the Reason is, because these internal Evidences can never be represented to them ; for if young Christians would tell to them their Experiences, they would account them Gibberish and Foolishness. But,

3. The Work of GOD may be discernable to them also ; and that by such Evidences as carry in them a Probability that the Devil is cast out. Nay, according to their own Principles they are obliged to believe it : For their professed Principle is, to judge every Man a Christian who is moral and orthodox : And tho' they be not competent Judges of Christian Experiences, from whence they might have a *Certainty* of the Work of GOD ; yet there are other Marks that are level to their Capacities, from whence they may have a *Probability*. As, when he that was formerly a Drunkard, lives a sober Life : When a vain, light and wanton Person becomes grave and sedate : When the Blasphemer becomes a Praiser of GOD : When Laughter is turned
into

into Mourning; and carnal Joy into Heaviness; and that professedly on account of their Soul's Condition: When the Ignorant are filled with Knowledge in divine Things, and the Tongue that was dumb in the Things of GOD, speaks the Language of *Canaan*: When the Erroneous are become Orthodox in fundamental Points: When such as never minded any Religion, do make Religion their only Business: When busy *Marthas*, and covetous Worldlings do neglect their worldly Concerns to seek after GOD's Ordinances. Now, these Things, and such like, are discernable to those who are graceless; and according to their own Rules, they ought to judge that the Devil is cast out.

Thirdly, It will be easy from hence, to prove the Doctrine, viz. *That it is a sure and infallible Proof of gracious Work of GOD's Spirit, when the Devil is cast out by Means of true Gospel-Doctrine.*

For, if the Devil possesses every carnal Heart in the Manner as has been proved, then he must be cast out by One stronger than himself; but Man is not stronger. And if Satan would cast out Satan, as a Confirmation of a Doctrine directly subversive of his Kingdom, he would be divided against himself; which is contrary to his Policy, and Enmity against GOD and Mankind. And consequently, *To cast him out, must be the Work of GOD's Spirit*, who alone can spoil him of his Armour, viz. Ignorance, vicious Desires, Blindness of Mind, Hardness of Heart, Unbelief, Errors, Presumption, and carnal Security, by which he trusted to barricade and fortify himself against the Power of GOD, and live peaceably in the carnal Heart.

Besides, to attend the Ordinances of GOD, to wait on him at his House of Prayer, instead of a Tavern or Play-house; to frequent Christian Societies;

ties; to desire Christian Conversation, instead of Balls, Dances, Frolicks, and Merry-Meetings of Good-Fellows; to study Holiness in Heart and Life; to mourn bitterly for Sin, and hate it; to seek the Favour and Presence of GOD, and Tokens of his Love; to be restless about the State of their Souls, so as nothing will quiet them but Assurance of Pardon; to love GOD, and rejoice in CHRIST JESUS above all Things, &c. Now, I say, to do these Things are not the Works of one that hath a Devil. And if it were the Work of Man, if he were the *moral Cause* of Conversion, then surely, the learned and elaborate Discourses, the moral Reasonings, the harmonious and eloquent Preaching of the Clergy, would have still persuaded Mankind to it in every Age. But on the contrary, since these Characters, and the Properties before described, are contrary to the Nature and Pursuits of *Satan*, and above the Power of both Men and Devils to effect; and only within the Power of GOD, agreeable to his Word, his Nature and Perfections: Then it unavoidably follows, That they are the Work of his Spirit.

All that remains now of the Doctrinal Part, is,
Fourthly, To prove, *That the Kingdom of GOD is come unto us at this Day.*

Oh the joyful Sound! *Unto us*, upon whom the Ends of the World are come! Surely all that hear me will rejoice, if I can make it appear.

That there has been a great religious Commotion in the World in our present Day, is so evident, that it cannot be denied: But there has been a Murmuring among the People; some saying, That GOD is with us of a Truth; that the Day-spring from on high has visited us; and the Day-star has
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risen in many Hearts: Others saying, Nay, it is all Deceit, or Delusion, or the Work of the Devil. But that CHRIST is come to his Church, will appear; I presume, in the Judgment of any considering Person, if I can make these Things appear:

1. That the Church was in the same Circumstances as when he us'd to visit it.

2. If the Manner of his Coming be in Substance the same.

3. If the Treatment he meets with be the same.

4. If the Consequences and Effects be the same.

5. If the Attempts and Objections made against him be the same. And, in a Word,

If the Devil be cast out by Means of true Gospel-Doctrine. And,

1. As to the Circumstances of the Church: He always came when it needed a Reformation, even in the Judgment of graceless Professors; when Religion dwindled into an empty Form, and Professors had lost the Life and Power of Godliness; in a Word, when there was Midnight-Darkness, and little Faith to be found on the Earth. Thus it was when he came in the Flesh; when he sent St. *Athanasius*, *Luther* and *Calvin*, and at the Reformation of *Scotland*. We find the graceless *Jews* prayed for the Day of the LORD, in *Amos* v. 18. And hence were our Pulpits filled with seemingly devout Prayers for a Revival of Religion, and Confessions of its decayed State. And what had we lately but a dry Formality? Did not all in general seem to be at Ease in *Zion*, and in much Peace about the State of their Souls? How few were asking the Watch-men, *What of the Night?* The Lives of Professors, careless, unholy, unguarded; Ordinances attended, Duties performed, Sermons preached, without Life or Power, and as little Success. Was not worldly Discourse our mutual Entertainment at our solemn Assemblies

Assemblies on Holy-days? Thus in Darkness and Security were we: And *like People, like Priest.*

2. As to the Manner of his Coming; it never was in such a Manner as carnal Persons imagined; but still unexpected, and out of the common Way. And this is a necessary Consequent of the State of the Church: For since he comes in a dark Time, we may easily conclude, that the Manner thereof is unobserv'd at first. He must needs come unawares, when a carnal World have forgotten and do neglect him; and do not know him, or the powerful Operations of his Spirit until they feel them. For tho' they may pray for the Day of the LORD, yet they know it not when it comes, and so do not know what they ask, *Amos v. 18.* Now, by this Means he comes always quite cross to the Inclinations of the Clergy, who are generally sunk in Carnality, as well as the People. And as a Consequence of this, the Ministers by whom he works, have always at first been few: And thus the Work appears the more eminently to be his own, the less probable that the Instruments appear. Thus it was when he came in the Flesh. He came indeed out of *Bethlehem*, but in a mean Condition; and afterwards unperceivably changing his Place, was mistaken. When he enter'd on his publick Ministry, it was not according to the Traditions of the Fathers; for we find they were surprized in *Luke iv.* when he began to expound the Scriptures, being neither a Scribe nor Pharisee. And the People not being used with such close and particular Applications, could not bear his new Methods. Passing by the established, but proud, bigotted, gainsaying Clergy, he chuses Twelve unlearned, unpolished Men, most of them Fishers; and gave them a Commission to preach the Gospel, without consulting the *Sanhedrim* about such *unprecedented* Proceedings. Thus was his Coming dark and cross to

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them.— Now, in our Days the Parallel is plain, for supposing the present Commotion to be the Work of GOD : Every one knows how cross it is to the Inclinations of the Clergy. Surely, our Opposers will confess, they neither did, nor do expect Religion to be revived in such a Manner, while there are so many Things in their Opinion wrong. Surely, it is a dark Day to them, and no Light in it ; many of them know not what to make of it, by their own Confession. We all know how few its Propagators are ; and they say, that most of us are unlearned : But do they not, by the by, bewray themselves herein ? For, if unlearned, they must have the less Rhetorick and Oratory ; and consequently the less able to bring such Things to pass. If it were the Work of Man, a superior Power of Man would overthrow it.--- In a Word, the Parallel holds in every Thing, only our Manner of Licensing is not *unprecedented*.

3. The Treatment he met with : As a native Consequence of his coming in so dark and mean a Condition, and cross to the Minds of the Clergy ; he was rejected by them, and by many of the Noble and Mighty after the Flesh ; who imbitter'd against him as many People as they could influence. And as a Consequence of his being disown'd by these, he was chiefly followed by what we call the *Mob*, the *Rabble*, the *common* and *meaner Sort*. And being disown'd by the self-righteous Moralists, was follow'd by the openly Profane, the *Publicans* and *Harlots* : For he is still set for the *Rise and Fall of many in Israel* ; and many who thought themselves *first*, and were esteemed so by others in the Dark, did show themselves to be *last*. Thus it was when he came in the Flesh ; rejected by the Clergy so generally, and by the Noble and Wise, that it was said, *Have any of the Rulers or Pharisees believed on him ? No : But this People who know not the Law,*
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are accursed.-- Just so is he treated by the same Ranks of Persons at this Day. May I not ask, Have any of the Rulers, have any of the Ministers embraced the present Work? Do they not rather prepossess and imbitter the carnal People against it? And many who seemed first in Religion, are they not become the very last, and the last, first? For our Opposers confess of their own Accord, That it is only the ignorant Rabble that embrace it; many of which never minded any Religion, and so do not know the Law. Sure they who know the Law might know, that it is a good Proof of a Day of GOD's Power, when the Poor have the Gospel preach'd to them, and do receive it, *Matth. xi. 5.* Might they not know that our LORD used this Argument? And also, that GOD causes foolish Things to confound the Wise? But they must confess, that tho' there be not many, yet, Glory to GOD! there are some of the Wise, and Mighty, and Noble on our Side.

4. The Effects and Consequences of his Coming: As a Consequence of the strong Opposition of the Clergy, and others of their Adherents, against him; contrary to their own Intentions, their Speaking of him was a Means of setting the People on the Search; and Numbers flock'd after him, to hear these new Doctrines, and new Methods; and were then caught in the Gospel-net: *As many as were ordained to eternal Life, believed.* Thus in *John vii. 11.* & seq. the Pharisees speaking against him, put him in the People's Minds, who began to talk of him. His Audiences were often deeply affected; and frequently divided between him and the Clergy: And hence we so often read, that *there was a Division among the People.* He never came to send Peace on the Earth, but a Sword, and Division, *Luke xii. 51-58.* Just so it has been in our Day. Many can say by Experience, that their Attention and Curiosity was raised by Means of the Contradictions

of their Ministers. And hence we have seen unusual Numbers going to hear the Word like thirty Flocks; and heard a great Mourning, like the Mourning of *Hadadrimmon* in the Valley of *Megiddon*. Also, there has been a Division among the People; some praising GOD for what their Eyes have seen, and their Ears heard, and their Souls felt; others going away mocking, contradicting, blaspheming.

Another Effect was, the breaking down of Bigotry; partly as a native Consequence of the Attention of all Parties being raised to come and hear; and partly by the Example and Directions of CHRIST and his Followers. Thus he freely conversed, eat and drank, with different opposite Parties, *Jews and Samaritans, Publicans and Pharisees*; and justified his so doing from the Need there was of it, that all might come freely and reap Benefit. And the Apostle in *Phil. iii. 15, 16*, advises real Christians who hold the Foundation, to walk together in such Things as they are agreed in; for in Things wherein they are disagreed they cannot. And just so our Opposers confess it to be now, while they accuse us for holding Communion with different Societies, and would insinuate, that we do so from some politick Design: Indeed there is this Policy in it, to gain some by any Means, and make a Party for JESUS CHRIST.

5. The Attempts: As a Consequence of the People's following CHRIST or his Ambassadors, and disregarding the Clergy, the latter always attempted to overthrow the *new Scheme*: Were (1.) unwearied in forming mischievous Devices against him; would tell the People they had an Imposture, and were deluded and deceived; followed him for no other End but to find something to cavil at; wrested both his Words and Actions to find Matter of Accusation. (2.) They were unsatisfied; for after they had been busy all along, they say,

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What do we? q. d. We have been too slack and cowardly; come let us bestir ourselves, and not suffer all to be overturned; we have prevailed nothing as yet, (3.) Their Attempts were still unsuccessful, and always tended to promote the Cause they were set to baffle: Tho' still they are busy, yet are conscious they prevail nothing. Thus, when the Scribes and Pharisees sought CHRIST at the Feast, *John vii. 11.* they put him in the People's Minds, who straight began to talk of him, some good, some evil: When the Pharisees perceived this, they forbid them to speak of him either good or ill; for so much is implied in these Words, *Howbeit, no Man spake openly of him for fear of the Jews.* They hoped that the Thoughts of CHRIST would wear out of the People's Minds thro' Time:—Just thus do the Opposers now to a Tittle. It can be made appear, how Companies of Ministers and People have met together in a private Manner, to consult how they might suppress the *new Scheme*, and what they could say against it: And indeed their Cavils, and the Spirit with which they are urged, do plainly show, that they rather desire Matter of Accusation, than that they really have it. How do they twist and wrest both the Words and Actions, and magnify the Blemishes of those who stand up for the Work of GOD? If they can find an unguarded Expression, they draw what horrid Consequences from it they can, and then affirm that this is the Man's Principles*. They want some plausible Pretence to blind the People. And they are yet saying, *What do we?*—And I could show, were it necessary, how every Instance of Opposition against the present Work, have all been turn'd to its Advantage. Oh that they would consider whom they fight against! for GOD is with us of a Truth. And now some of

* For Proof of all this see the *Querists*.

them beg for Peace, and would have us be silent about these controverted Things, that they may wear out of Mind. Their asking Peace and Quietness has an Aspect pleasing to the Flesh, and looks plausible: But GOD forbid that we should cease to proclaim his wondrous Deeds, to humour the Enemies of his Work! No; let us tell them abroad more loudly, tho' it gall the Consciences, and torment the Minds of all the Opposers on Earth, Rev. xi. 10. Thus far we are on a straight Parallel, by the Confession of our Opposers.

6. The Objections made against him, are the same as usual. For,

(1.) The Pharisees objected Disorder to our LORD, and his Apostles. How often are they accused of not walking according to the Traditions of the Elders? And our Opposers say, This cannot be the Work of GOD, because not according to their Order: But they have not proved, that GOD is obliged to work by their Rules.

(2.) When our LORD and his Apostles pleaded for free Grace, they were called Enemies to Moses and the Law; and he was often call'd a Blasphemer. So the present Opposers of GOD's Work, accuse some of us of speaking against the Law, and call us *Antinomians*; and tug and strive, by wrestling both the Words and Intentions of some of our Brethren, to prove them Blasphemy *. *He hath spoken Blasphemy, why hear ye him?*

(3.) It was objected to our LORD and his Apostles, that they held Communion with Persons of different Societies. Hence they stumbled, because he kept Company with *Publicans*, and *Samaritans*, and *Sinners*. And thought, had he been so much as a common Prophet, he would have known better what Company to keep; and hence concluded, he

* See the *Querists*, p. 9.

could not possibly be the CHRIST. — So our Opposers say, that we bring the Church into Confusion by a mix'd Communion of different Persuasions, who yet hold the Foundation. And further they ask, Why these who were of no religious Society, are fond of this *new Scheme* * ? *Why eateth your Master with Publicans and Sinners* ? He that pretends to be so good a Man, why does he keep such bad Company ? They seem now to think it unjust, that Persons who never did so much in Religion as they, should enter into the Kingdom of Heaven before them.

(4.) It is objected to us, that this Commotion rends the Church ; divides Congregations and Families ; sets People at variance ; makes them harsh and censorious. So we hear *Tertullus*, Acts xxiv. 5. accuse *Paul* as a *pestilent Fellow*, a *Mover of Sedition*, a *Profaner of the Temple*. The Pharisees, *John* ix. 44. ask in a sour Manner, *Are we blind also* ? Dost thou judge us to be blind too so rashly ? And *Elijah*, because a Son of Thunder, tho' he was the most peaceable, yet he must needs be call'd a *Troubler of Israel*, in 1 *Kings* xviii. 17. And, in a Word, both they and we are Turners of the World upside down, Subverters of Peace and Church-Government, and the like. Read *Luke* xii. 51--57. *Suppose ye*, says CHRIST, *that I am come to send Peace on the Earth* ? *I came not to send Peace but a Sword* ; -- *to divide a Family against itself*. — Why cannot our present Opposers discern the Signs of THESE TIMES ?

(5.) The present Opposers say, they do not quarrel with the Work of GOD ; no, far be it from them ; but only with these Disorders. So, in *John* x. 33. the *Jews* say, *For a good Work we stone thee not* : No ; far be it from us, do not so mistake us, we would be ready to encourage every Thing that

has the Appearance of Piety; 'tis not for thy good Works, *but for Blasphemy*. But his good Works, instead of procuring their Favour, did raise their Envy: And tho' they would not be so barefaced before the People; yet they could willingly have embued their Hands in his Blood, for no other Crime but his good Works; because he so far outshined them. But on account of the People, they must first find some plausible Pretence against him. They took no Notice, or laid no Stress on his Miracles; were never satisfied with all the Evidences he gave them; their common Question was, *What Sign shewest thou?* Tho' they seemed resolved not to be satisfied with any Sign. They still found Exceptions against all his Works; and when they could not deny the Matter of Fact, they ascribed it to the Devil sometimes. How often do they ask the Man born blind, how he received his Sight? and would willingly have denied that he was blind: How earnest were they to find some Flaw or other? And when they could find none, they put a religious Face upon their Envy; exhort the Man to give GOD the Glory, but not to mind JESUS; for they were sure he was a Sinner. -- Just so it is now a-days to a Tittle. Our Opposers have no End of asking for Evidences; without taking Notice of the Power of GOD, that has appear'd in the Assemblies or on the Lives of Men: They still muster up Objections, and harp only on what they call Disorder. They gather a great many of their Exceptions together, and then ask, if these Irregularities be the Work of GOD. Without observing the deep Concern that Souls seem to be under, they only ask about the *Fits* and *Convulsions* that their Sorrow throws them into; and which they would be ready to allow for, in worldly Respects, as the sudden News of the Death of Friends, or the like. And if some unexceptionable Evidence of the Power of GOD be al-

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ledged against them; they strive to evade its Force some Way or other, by saying, That possibly GOD may bring Good out of Evil; but yet do speak against the Whole as a Devilish Work. They seem glad to get any Objection against it; not willing that it should be the Work of GOD. They fix their Eyes only on the Failures and Blemishes of those who defend it, and magnify Mole-hills into Mountains: And if they can get nothing that has the Appearance of a Fault, they are industrious to forge and spread slanderous Reports and false Insinuations; and seem as fond of them as if they had got a Victory. In a Word, they appear as if their greatest Desire was, to blind their own Eyes, and stop their own Ears, that hearing they might not understand, and seeing they might not perceive, lest they should be *Converts* too, as they call us by Way of Ridicule.

Thus the Parallel runs clear and undeniable. The same Attempts and Objections, from the same Ranks of Persons, do prove the same Dispositions to be in graceless Persons now as formerly; the same Blindness and Enmity. And why should it be thought strange that CHRIST's pretended Ambassadors are his bitterest Enemies, seeing it has been always so? The LORD always reformed his Church contrary to their Desires. There is the same Kind of Opposition and Opposers too, in Scotland and England at present, as here in America. And had I Time, I could show that all Things, in every Period of the Church, answer and agree with this, as Face answers Face in a Glass. But the Coming of CHRIST in the Flesh, will be found to be analogous to his Coming at other Times; and the Parallel from that, is most level to the Capacity of every one; and trac'd with less Difficulty and more Certainty by common People: And therefore I have

have chiefly compar'd that Period and our present Day.

But lastly, if *Satan* be cast out, *It will be* instead of all Proofs, that the Kingdom of GOD is come unto us. For, says CHRIST, *If I cast out Devils by the Spirit of GOD, then the Kingdom of GOD is come unto you.*

I have shown under the *Second Head*, how the People of GOD may know this to be true of themselves; and how they are satisfied of each other by Analogy of Experiences; and accordingly they believe, and are sure that the Kingdom of GOD is come. They know the Voice of their Beloved. And therefore I shall only insist on such Evidences now as can appear to the World.

And here it is evident, that a peaceful World has been roused with a Witness about the State of their Souls, *Luke xi. 21, 22.* These who were ignorant can speak skilfully about religious Things; and even the Graceless are increased in Knowledge: Which is a Proof, that *Light is come into the World.* Some *Deists* and *Papists* are become sound in the Faith; and Drunkards have become sober; Swearers and Blasphemers drop their Oaths, and speak reverently of GOD: Vain Persons who minded no Religion, but frequented Taverns, Plays and Frolicks, passing their Time in Filthiness, foolish Talking and Jesting, or singing paltry Songs, do now frequent Christian Societies, seek Christian Conversation, and talk of Soul Concerns; and chuse to express their Mirth in Psalms, and Hymns, and spiritual Songs. They who were too sprightly to be devout, and esteemed it an unmanly Thing to shed Tears for their Soul's State, have mourned as for an only Son, and seemed to be in Bitterness as for a First-born, *Zech. xii. 10.* Worldlings have quit their Labour, and earnestly followed the Ordinances of GOD. Pious and Soul-searching Books, that

merly lay neglected, are now in great Request. And, which is yet more, Persons who only came to mock at the Lamentations of others, have been convinced ere they went away, and by free Grace profelyted to such Ways as they formerly despised. Ministers have been strengthened and stirred up, to preach every Day for some Time considerable.--- And that all this is consequent upon the Preaching of true Gospel-Doctrine, the printed Writings of those Ministers, by whom the Work is carried on, will prove. Their Doctrine is plainly subversive of *Satan's* Kingdom; tho' they be slanderously reported of by some, who strive to perplex Things that are plain, and make an unguarded Expression to be unsound Doctrine: Yet, if their Doctrines be compared with those of our pious Ancestors, it will be evident, that they harmonize in the same Truths in experimental Things; and consequently we must think, That *the Hearts of the Children are turned to the Fathers*, from whom they had degenerated.

Now, let it be observ'd, that I do not lay down these outward Evidences as infallible Marks of true Grace: Let none judge himself gracious from them alone, without the internal Evidences formerly described. I only urge these, because graceless Persons cannot judge from the other Marks; and because Opposers of GOD's Work are obliged, by their own professed Principles, to acknowledge, That *Satan is cast out*, when such Things appear.--- And were it necessary, I could produce many Instances of such Reformations as I have mentioned.

And how shall any now account for their Opposition to this Work? I desire to speak to such with Bowels of Love.

My dear Fellow-Mortals! Let me a while expostulate the Matter with you. Why do you not act agreeable to your own Principles? A dry Formalist,

list, who shows no Relish, nor Power of Godliness, seems to live chaste, honest, and sober; and you charitably judge he does so by the Grace of GOD. Another, who was drunken and unclean, becomes chaste and sober, lively and zealous withal; and you insinuate or say, that it is by the Power of the Devil. Why do you not consist with yourselves? Why do you say the one is of GOD, and the other of the Devil, who is a zealous Pleader for the Work of GOD? Do you not see, that GOD can condemn you by your own Rules? One Man diligently attended GOD's Ordinances all his Days, being instructed out of the Law, and accustomed to approve of the Things that are more excellent; and you would allow he does so by the Power of GOD, because he is an orderly Man, and is very orthodox in Mint, and Anise, and Cumin. Another that was heedless of all Religion, a Publican, Harlot, Sabbath-breaker, Erroneous, does now take much Pains to wait upon GOD, and begins to observe the divine Law; and yet you say, it is the Work of Men or Devils; Therefore, these very Persons, whom you approve of, shall be your Judges, and witness against your glaring Partiality. These despised Publicans and Harlots, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven before you, and sit down with *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*, when you, the professed Children of the Kingdom, shall be thrust down to utter Darkness, except you repent.

Was not the World very secure a while ago, in Comparison of what it is now? Did not many appear to be at Ease in *Zion*, who are now alarmed? Or if you should deny that moral Professors were in a carnal Security, tho' contrary to the express Declaration of many of them; yet must you not confess, that the openly profane, the grossly ignorant, who minded no Religion, were in a carnal Security? And if such Persons had Peace about the
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State of their Souls, must you not say, that the Devil made the Peace? Now then, let me ask you, *How can one enter into a strong Man's House, and spoil his Goods, unless he first bind the strong Man?* If the Devil kept these in Slavery, must they not have been rescued by a stronger than he? But Man is not stronger; and consequently it must be the Mighty GOD, who thus divides the Spoil with the Strong, *Isaiab liii. 12.*

Do you not perceive a great Change on some of your Neighbours? Do you not observe some of them to be more devout and serious, more sober and knowing, who used to be quite otherwise? And how do you account for these Things? Why do you not either make the Tree good, and its Fruit good; or else, corrupt, and its Fruit corrupt? Either say, that Sobriety and Devotion, Temperance and Chastity, diligent Attendance on GOD's Ordinances, Christian Conference, Sorrow for Sin, Leaving it off, &c. are good, and proceed from a good Cause; or else, say that they are evil, and proceed from an evil Cause. But if you say they are good; why do you ascribe them to Satan? Can he give what he has not? Either speak Things that are consistent, or else be silent. *And why do you not even of yourselves judge what is right? But, O Generation of Vipers, how can ye, being evil, and unrenewed, speak good Things? For out of the Abundance of the Heart, the Mouth speaketh, Matth. xii. 34.*

Perhaps you will say, That you see no Change, only that People are more censorious and uncharitable, judging their Neighbours to be graceless, and seem harsh and passionate against other Ministers, whom they call carnal; and you ask, Are these the Fruits of the Spirit of GOD?

In Answer, I would desire yourselves to tell by what Rule you would have them judge an Opposer
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of GOD's Work to be gracious, who persists against all Evidences of it? Either he does so ignorantly, or knowingly? If ignorantly, does it not prove that he is spiritually blind, and cannot perceive the Things of GOD, and so must be *Graceless*? But if he does so spitefully, contrary to the Remonstrances of his Conscience, enlighthned by the Spirit of GOD; it seems to be plainly the unpardonable Sin. And why will you accuse me for judging thus, until you prove what I contend for to be the Work of the Devil? Why do you make that Practice an Argument that it is not the Work of GOD, since its being his Work will justify the Practice? If I should judge Opposers of GOD's Work to be gracious, as well as those who plead for it; then I would, like you, be inconsistent with myself; then I would make it, not the Work of GOD, but some indifferent Thing, where Men might be good, and hold either Side.--- It is no new Thing to hear Zeal for GOD, and Opposition to the Enemies of his Cause, mistaken for Passion and Rage, by such as never have felt the Love of GOD in their Hearts. And if some Christians, when provoked by your blasphemous Railery, do speak passionately with Indignation, I think something of it is very justifiable, when I consider *Paul's* Words to *Ehymas*, Acts xiii. 10. *O full of all Subtilty and all Mischief, thou Child of the Devil, thou Enemy of all Righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the Right Ways of the LORD?* But, no doubt, their Zeal may sometimes be as rash as *Peter's*, when he cut off *Malchus's* Ear: The LORD does not approve of this, neither do we: Young Christians have often too much Wild-Fire, mixt with true Zeal. And if ever your Hearts had been warm with Zeal for GOD and his Cause, if you had ever had a *First Love*; (Rev. ii. 4.) then you would know it to be as I say; and would be ready

dy to make Allowances, especially in some warm Tempers.--- But I suppose you would have them be perfect, all Spirit, and no Flesh.--- They themselves long to be so. But if they were, it would not screen them from your Malice, more than our LORD from the Pharisees. *Malchus* had as good an Argument as you, to prove that *Peter* had no Grace; that CHRIST and all his Followers were quarrelsome and seditious: And it is probable he did improve it to the same End as you do other Things; asking, if that was any Fruit of the Spirit to cut off his Ear? No doubt he might say, "If that be Conversion, may GOD keep me from it; these that pretend most of all to it, are the most bitter and outrageous; one of the Gang cut off my Ear, from a religious Pretence; there's none of them better; they are all embarked in the same Ship, and have the same sour and harsh Turn of Mind." Just thus you blind yourselves by poring only on the black Spots of GOD's People, and strive to make them more so: Where then is your boasted Charity? Do you not see that all your Cavils and Objections prove you to be ignorant of the Things of GOD, and Enemies to his Work? Do you not see that your very Objections prove it to be his Work, and always will? For thus has GOD always overshot the Devil in his own Bow. Perhaps some of you will say, We are not against it. But do you not show, that you are not for it? Are you not more cordial with its Enemies than its Friends? Are you not still making Exceptions against it? I look upon all Neuters, as Enemies in Affairs of Religion. Away with your carnal Prudence! and either follow GOD or *Baal*. *He that is not actually with us, is against us; and he that gathereth not with us, scattereth abroad*, Matth. xii. 30. I know there will be no End of your Objections,

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and calling for Evidences, until God open your Eyes, if ever he do it. The Question is likely still to be, *What Sign, what Proof do you give us, seeing so many Things are wrong?* I will answer, as our LORD did on the same Occasion, *An evil and adulterous Generation seeketh after a Sign, and there shall no other Sign be given to it, but only the POWER of GOD's WORD* on the Hearts and Lives of Mankind. This is the last and greatest Evidence; and if you reject this, you reject the last Means of your Conviction.

I tell you further, *That the Sin against the Holy Ghost shall never be forgiven.* And I verily fear; that many, both Ministers and People, in this Generation, will be guilty of it: For GOD generally leaves a Testimony in the Consciences of his bitterest Enemies; and when they persist against these Convictions, and the clearest Evidences of Matters of Fact, spitefully to reproach the Work of his Spirit; I have small Hopes that they shall ever be renewed to Repentance. For, was it not in these very Circumstances the *Pharisees* were, when our LORD charges them with this unpardonable Sin? *Matt. xii. 31.* Indeed I am afraid, lest I hear to my Sorrow, that some of you die in a *fearful Looking for of Wrath and fiery Indignation.* But whoever of you do these Things ignorantly, as *Paul*, who verily thought he should do many Things against *Jesus of Nazareth*; there is yet Hope concerning you. I beseech you then, fear and tremble to proceed further; Pray to GOD, if, perhaps, the Thoughts of your Hearts and Words of your Mouths may be forgiven you. And do not resist these Evidences that are as clear as you are capable of, until GOD give you to know the Things of his Spirit. If you will resist, I tell you in the Fear of GOD, it will be more tolerable for *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*, for *Tyre* and

and *Sidon* in the Day of Judgment than for you; *Nineveh*, together with them, shall rise up in Judgment against you, and shall condemn you; because you have Opportunity of greater Light than they. And tho' you be exalted nearer Heaven, yet wo to you, for with a more dreadful Vengeance will you be plunged deeper into Hell. And every Word you speak against the Work of GOD, you shall give Account thereof in the Day of Judgment. Your false and malicious Slanders against GOD's Servants, will be set in Order before the assembled Universe. And how will you then make good your Party against GOD? Neither will the Ministers, who excite and encourage you, be able to deliver their miserable Votaries. How will they ease your affrighted Souls, your disturbed awakened Consciences on a Dying-Bed? Tempters never prove good Comforters. No, you shall fall in the Day, and the false Prophet shall fall with you in the Night; and GOD will destroy you both; you shall go down with them into the Sides of the Pit, and make your Beds in Hell; both shall fall together into the burning Gulf of eternal Wo, unless you repent. And then you will curse them to all Eternity, and yourselves too. Beware then of ravening Wolves, tho' they come unto you in Sheeps Clothing: They come for no other End but for to steal, and to kill and destroy the Sheep. Do not believe that the LORD sends Ministers to oppose his Work. No, they run, but he has not sent them. Let neither Father nor Mother, Husband, Wife, or Child, nor Reverend Father, turn you against the Work of GOD.— But whether you will hear or forbear; whether you will receive it or not: Yet, as I have proved, of this be certain, *That the Kingdom of GOD is come unto you*; I know a graceless Heart will not rejoice at it.

Time would fail me to draw what Inferences the Doctrine affords.— I have spoken to Opposers; I

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now come to speak to such as acknowledge that the Kingdom of GOD is come, who yet are not the Subjects of it.

Perhaps now you think yourselves pretty safe, because you do not oppose it openly. But, let not an Acknowledgment satisfy you, without feeling the Power thereof upon your Hearts. What will it avail you, that the Kingdom of GOD is come UNTO you, unless it be WITHIN you? No doubt, some of you have felt some Power awakening and convincing you of Sin; and you have folded your Hands to sleep again, as if the Bitterness of Death had been past, and thus have rested short of JESUS CHRIST. Poor Souls! you are but just where you were; or rather in a worse Condition. True Grace is an active Principle, and would not suffer you to be so easy, while you had Flesh to grapple with. Read with Fear *Matth. xii. 43, 44, 45*. When a Person is awaken'd to a Sense of Sin, and Dread of Wrath, the unclean Spirit *goes out*, is not *cast out*; does not much disturb him, but strives to lull him in Security and Presumption: Then he sweeps himself clean of grosser Commissions of Sin, or Omissions of Duty; and garnishes himself with a more strict Formality in Religion, while the Heart is, nevertheless, empty of renewing Grace; the Devil finding it so, repossesses him. And all that is remarkable of some such is, that they have been remarkably worse than ever before. And even so it is like to be with many in this wicked Generation. O Sinner, if ever GOD intend Mercy to thy Soul, thou art likely to be roused up with more Terror than ever. Nothing but the Kingdom of GOD *within you* will do. Tho' you may be amazed to-day, and cry, *Hosanna*; to-morrow you will cry, *Crucify him*, if you are graceless. You will never stand a fiery Trial, but are likely to turn open Enemies, upon some Offence that GOD will cast in your Way

Way to try you. Blessed only is he, whosoever shall not be offended in JESUS CHRIST, *Matth. xi. 6.* It is difficult *not to be offended* in him. Wo to the ungodly World, because Offences will turn them away from him, or else against him. For they are not so confident in him, or his Work, as to stand all Shocks.

But, *lastly*, I know there are some of you that believe, and are sure to your own Experience, That *GOD is come to Zion.*

(For, if GOD had not left us a very small Remnant, we should have been as *Sodom*, and made miserable like unto *Gomorrab*. If the Hearts of some Fathers and Children had not been turned to each other, surely GOD would have come and smitten the whole Earth with a Curse, *Mal. iv. 6.*)

You know that GOD has opened the Eyes of your Minds, and you have seen your own Vileness, and Sin in its Hatefulness; Holiness in its Loveliness; GOD in his Glory, his Justice and Mercy; and CHRIST in his beauteous, his dyed Garments, as your Righteousness, Hope and Joy. You looked by Faith on him whom you pierced, and did mourn for him, as for an only Son, and were in Bitterness, as for a First-born. Your stony Hearts were turned into a Spring, when GOD poured upon you the Spirit of Grace and Supplication: Then was there a great Mourning, like the Mourning of *Hadadrimmon* in the Valley of *Megiddon*; and every Assembly was *Boëhim*, a Place of Weeping. Did not JESUS there give you his Loves? And your Hearts have been knit to him ever since. I doubt not but some of you, from a Sense of much Forgiveness, would gladly have wash'd his Feet with Tears, and wip'd them with the Hairs of your Heads. Your Souls follow hard after GOD. And, in a Word, all your Hopes, Fears, Desires, Difficulties, Comforts, Loves,

Loves, Joys, and Company, are new. Happy
 Souls! Behold, I come to tell you glad Tidings of
 great Joy; *The Kingdom of GOD is WITHIN you;*
 and Satan is cast out into the Earth; he has fallen
 like Lightning from Heaven. Behold, all Things are
 yours, and ye are CHRIST's, and CHRIST is GOD's.
 Then let your Light so shine before Men, that even
 your Enemies may be ashamed, having nothing to
 say justly of your good Conversation in CHRIST.
 But rejoyce, and be exceeding glad, when they speak
 all Manner of Evil against you falsely for his Name's
 Sake. Why should you not rejoyce to be counted
 worthy to suffer Shame for his Cause? Put on, al-
 so, the Meekness and Gentleness of CHRIST, and
 the whole Armour of GOD, that ye may be able to
 stand in the Evil Day that is coming. Remember,
 that always when GOD rais'd a People for himself,
 he purified them by Afflictions and Persecutions.
 GOD will try you as Gold is tried in the Fire, un-
 til he purge your Dross, and utterly take away your
 Tin: And then he will take your purified Souls to
 the Regions of eternal Day. In Patience, then,
 possess your Souls; and in the mean time, sing Ho-
 sannas to the Son of David, and say,

Blessed is he that cometh in the Name of the LORD
to save us, Hosanna in the highest: Glory to GOD,
because Peace is proclaim'd on Earth, and good Will
towards Men. The LORD whom we sought, is come
to his Temple; we wait until He come the Second
Time.

Even so, come, LORD JESUS, come quickly. A-
 men. Amen.

F I N I S.



N. B. The *Querists*, so often quoted in this Sermon,
 with Mr. Whitefield's Answer thereto, may be had of Mr.
 Oswald at the Rose and Crown in the Poultry.